

CAROLINA ASH

Fraxinus caroliniana Mill.

OTHER COMMON NAMES: Florida ash, Pop ash, Swamp ash, Water ash.

FORM: Rarely more than 40 feet high, diameter of trunk sometimes 12 inches, small branches forming a narrow round-topped head.

BARK: 1/16-1/8 inch thick, light gray, more or less marked by large irregularly shaped round patches, separating on the surface into thin appressed scales.

TWIGS: At first terete, light green, glabrous or tomentose, become light brown tinged with red in their first winter, light gray or yellow their second year, marked with large pale lenticels.

LEAVES: Opposite, 7-12 inches long, compound with 5-7 long-stalked leaflets that are ovate to oblong, acute or acuminate, rarely rounded at the apex; cuneate, rounded or subcordate at the base, coarsely serrate with acute incurved teeth or entire, 3-7 inches long, 2-3 inches wide, dark green above, paler below.

FLOWERS: Dioecious, appear before the leaves in short or ultimately elongated panicles; staminate flower with a minute or nearly obsolete calyx; calyx of pistillate flower cup-shaped, deeply divided.

FRUIT: Elliptic to oblong-ovate, frequently 3-winged, 2 inches long, 1/3-3/4 inches wide, often marked on the 2 faces by conspicuous impressed midvein, the wing is many-nerved, occasionally bright violet color, acute, acuminate or rounded and emarginate at apex, surrounds the seed.

WINTER BUDS: Terminal bud 1/8 inch long, with 3 pairs of ovate, acute, chestnut-brown puberulous scales, those of the outer rank shorter than the others.

WOOD: Light, soft, weak, coarse-grained, nearly white, sometimes tinged with yellow, sapwood thick, the smallest and least valuable of the eastern species of ash.

USES: Not utilized.

HABITAT: Deep river swamps inundated several months of the year, rarely in drier ground.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS: Fruit often 3-winged, long stipitate; the wing surrounds the seed; smallest of eastern ashes.

DISTRIBUTION IN ALABAMA: Reported from St. Clair, Tuscaloosa, Dallas, Russell, Dale, Covington, Butler, Clarke, Conecuh, and Mobile Counties.

EXPLANATION OF PLATE

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| 1. A fruiting branch | 4. A leaf |
| 2. Vertical section of a fruit | 5. A winter branchlet |
| 3. A seed | |



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